

in demonstrating just how entangled the early modern world was and in suggesting renewed strategies for future scholarship.

Joseph M. Gonzalez, *California State University, Fullerton*
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Anatomy of a Duel in Jacobean England: Gentry Honour, Violence and the Law.
Lloyd Bowen.

Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021. xviii + 230 pp. \$115.

Montague and Capulet. Hatfield and McCoy. Campbell and MacDonald. There are feuds that have come down to us in both history and myth. The very names of the families conjure images of generational anger, of tit-for-tat violence. Movies, miniseries, and stage plays have all made hay from the richly emotional and deeply human stories of kinship, family defense, and social struggle. And in Lloyd Bowen's book, we have a new feud to build upon our collective memory of honor, anger, and violence: Egerton and Morgan.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, two comparatively obscure families of Welsh gentry began a protracted social and legal conflict that peaked with a duel, fought with rapiers near Highgate, between the leading scions Edward Morgan and John Egerton. The conflict was a collision between old and new money, between those consolidating their landholdings and those seeking to expand their wealth, between those at the top of the local social hierarchy and those eagerly climbing it. It neatly wraps up many of the social and economic processes shaping the experience of the middling gentry at the turn of the Stuart age. And its consequences for these families were significant, as John Egerton was killed on the scene and Edward Morgan, severely wounded, was apprehended and tried in both criminal and civil arenas.

Fortunately for historians, this otherwise petty duel left an enviable wealth of documentation that allows Bowen to trace the conflict's roots and to follow the legal aftermath of the duel, fought on a foggy morning in April 1610. The history of this conflict can be traced into the mid-sixteenth century with the rise to prominence of Edward Morgan Sr., as a lawyer and local official in Flintshire and his subsequent encounters with the landowner Sir Philip Egerton of Cheshire (chapter 1). In the early seventeenth century these two clans—new money versus old—came to dispute over the inheritance of a property owned by a common relative. The complexities of this dispute are given full treatment in chapter 2. This remained only a legal dispute until 1608, when Edward Morgan began antagonizing his counterpart in the Egerton clan, John (chapter 3).

The duel itself marked the culmination of these antagonisms in 1610. In chapter 5, Bowen reconstructs the events, or at least the varying versions of the events, in careful and engaging detail after first providing, in chapter 4, a nice overview of the legal and

social status of dueling in early modern England. In the wake of Egerton's death, Morgan was subjected to a trial by a coroner's jury, which proceeded with each side attempting to influence the jury and corrupt the coroner (chapter 6). The parties needed to sway the decision on the critical question: was Morgan's slaying of Egerton murder or manslaughter? (chapter 7). Morgan was hauled through various courts, including King's Bench, until he was eventually convicted of murder, for which he received royal pardon from James I (chapter 8). In the aftermath of the duel and the protracted legal process it engendered, both families shifted their succession plans and attempted to maintain their steady progress in the social climb upon which they embarked in the sixteenth century (chapter 9).

This microhistory is an impressive deep dive into the thick documentation and surrounding historical contexts of a single event. Bowen uses the duel as an opportunity to explore many of the major historical processes, such as the rise of a new class of rural gentry, that were underway in England as the Tudor dynasty came to an end. He also engages broader European questions, in particular the ongoing debate about the relationships between the state, the law, and elite violence. Slightly parochial, as English legal history often must be, it is broadly accessible to non-experts in the topic. Of particular value is Bowen's treatment of the significant questions of manslaughter and murder in homicide trials, and how the English common law determined those categories.

I heartily recommend this book to all scholars of European violence, the law, and elite social relationships. Bowen has written a thorough microhistory in the best sense, reaching from a single event to a much broader constellation of important historical issues.

Colin Rose, *Brock University*
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Armies and Political Change in Britain, 1660–1750. Hannah Smith.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. xii + 346 pp. \$100.

The institutional history of the British army in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is well-trodden ground, but the role of the army in politics has not, until now, received the kind of detailed attention that Hannah Smith's excellent study, *Armies and Political Change in Britain, 1660–1750*, offers readers. In eight chapters, covering the period from the Restoration to the end of the War of Austrian Succession, Smith makes a compelling argument that the army had a "profound effect" on British politics (300). The book is firmly situated in the field of war and society, presenting a balanced assessment of the political, military, and sociocultural forces shaping public perceptions of the British army. Smith draws on parliamentary speeches, letters, and memoirs, as well as contemporary journals, pamphlets and newsletters, stage plays, engravings, and funerary statuary detailing how those perceptions changed, for the better, by 1750.